

# Pearl Harbor Peril

## Purpose

Students will formulate historical questions and use a variety of information resources to find, summarize, and evaluate historical data in regards to the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

## Materials

*For the teacher:* wall map of the world, rubric to assess students' research papers

*For the students:* access to the Internet and word processing software

## Activity

### A. Pre-Activity Preparation

1. Determine the criteria for the word-processed research paper that the students will write.
2. Develop a rubric to assess the paper.

### B. Pre-Activity Discussion

1. Write the word "territory" on the board. Ask students to describe their own territories within the classroom. What space do they define as their own when they're in class?
2. Ask students what they do when their territory is "invaded". Do they fight, argue, go to an adult, "get even," or do other things? Write their responses on the board.
3. Inform students that, just as they have their own personal territories within the classroom, countries have territories that are usually defined by national borders. Ask a student to point out the boundaries of the United States on the map.
4. Ask students to describe the ways that a country defends its territory. Explain that nations sometimes fight over their borders and territories and countries sometimes go to war to extend their territories, taking new land away from other countries or groups of people.

### C. Description of Activity

1. Tell the students that one of the most famous events in U.S. history was the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. Ask what they know about this event.
2. Explain that this incident was partially related to Japan's desire to

## Technology Literacy Standards

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII
1	X	X	X	X		X	X
2	X	X	X	X		X	X
3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
4		X				X	X
5						X	X
6		X		X		X	
7				X		X	
8				X		X	
9				X		X	
10				X		X	
11				X		X	
12				X		X	
13				X		X	
14						X	
15				X			
16				X			

**X** = This Technology Literacy Standard is addressed in this lesson.

= This Technology Literacy Standard is not addressed in this lesson.

expand its territory and to the United State's desire to prevent Japan from doing so.

3. Show the location of Pearl Harbor on the Hawaiian island of Oahu.
4. Explain that, before attacking Pearl Harbor, Japan was in control of parts of China and modern-day Vietnam.
5. Ask: Why do you think Japan would have wanted to control this territory? Ask them to consider reasons why Japan might decide to expand.
6. Explain that the U.S. and Japan were not on good terms with each other in 1941. Ask: Why would the U.S. want to keep warships stationed in Pearl Harbor? Why do you think the Japanese would have chosen to attack Pearl Harbor rather than another part of the U.S.?
7. Explain your criteria for the research paper the students will write.
8. Have students go to the National Geographic website and research more about the attack on Pearl Harbor (<http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor/>).
9. The students should formulate a research question and take notes on the people, places, events, and developments of the attack.
10. Allow students time to write their research papers using word processing software,

#### **D. Close the Activity**

1. Have each student share what he/she wrote in his/her research paper.
2. Discuss any preconceived notions regarding Pearl Harbor that they found to be incorrect after doing the research.

## **Classroom Assessment** \_\_\_\_\_

Collect students' research papers and use the teacher-developed rubric to assess them as desired.